

Point Three

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The monthly magazine of TOC H



Point Three

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Letters, articles and news items are welcomed, and should be addressed to the Toc H Editorial Office, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6BT (Telephone: 0296 623911)

Opinions expressed (including the editorial) are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement.

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(Telephone: 0296 623911.)

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Toc H is a Movement of people who seek to build friendships, and offer service, across the barriers that usually divide us from one another. The basic unit is the group — at best a good cross-section of the local neighbourhood — which meets together regularly, and seeks to serve the community around it. Toc H was founded in 1915 by the Rev P B 'Tubby' Clayton, and since then has been providing opportunities for people to test the Christian way by practical experiment.

All members pledge themselves to try:

1. To welcome all in friendship and lessen by habit of thought, word and deed the prejudices which separate people.
2. To give personal service.
3. To find their own convictions while listening with respect to the views of others.
4. To acknowledge the spiritual nature of man and to test the Christian way by trying it.

This magazine is a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world as well as a record of Toc H service. Its title derives from the third of these Four Points.

Cover picture

David Norris relaxing at the end of the London Marathon. (See 'Round and About'.)

Editorial

Tucked safely away in my filing cabinet at home is a file marked 'Sermons. They are not kept there in order that they should be published posthumously for a waiting and grateful posterity, but because of a strange reluctance to throw away something which has taken such effort to produce! One old sermon which I make sure to keep carefully raises a wry chuckle every time I catch sight of the front page. It is the first sermon which I ever wrote, and before I was allowed to deliver myself of my inspired pearls of wisdom to an admiring congregation I had to submit it all to my tutor for his comment. It is that comment which so scorched itself into my memory at first reading that I scarcely need to look it up. 'The opening', he wrote in his measured hand, 'is an unmitigated disaster! It does improve eventually — but then, what else could it do?' I was finally able to console myself that starting at the bottom, as I so obviously had done, did mean that no matter what I tried things probably wouldn't get much worse.

In taking over *Point Three* from John Mitchell I find myself in a somewhat different position! Far from taking over something which is virtually out for the count I have a number of illustrious predecessors who have all built it into something very good indeed. I feel sure that had John not been raised to higher things he would have continued to distinguish himself in this chair for some time to come. He will, I am very glad to say, continue to contribute to these pages, although from a somewhat different position. In his final Editorial John expressed his thanks to all those who have sent contributions in to *Point Three*. Those contributions will continue to be most welcome — although, as I'm sure you will understand, we cannot undertake to print absolutely everything that comes in. But please keep on sending in your items of news, and if you have any ideas about feature articles you would like to see, please let me know. I do promise that I will not necessarily ask you to write them.

Challenges

It is often said of Toc H, in one way or another, that it's purpose is to challenge people, to lead them on to the next step for them, to encourage their growth, and so on. In many people's experience that has been a most valuable part of their involvement with the Movement. Many of us can point to moments in our own growth which have come about as a direct consequence of a challenge which we have faced, and often that challenge will have grown out of our Toc H involvement. But it is all too easy, when we grow into some kind of leadership role, to concentrate on the challenges to other people and entirely miss the point that our own growth still depends upon us recognising and facing our own challenges. Thus organisation at any level can become exclusively concerned with the exercise of whatever authority it possesses, and its deepest concern can be with its own self-preservation. This is a built-in tendency in all organisations from the largest to the littlest — none are exempt. Thus high purposes can be first obscured and ultimately lost altogether.

In 1943 William Temple addressed himself to this problem and, in a lecture given at the Central Hall, Westminster, had this to say:

Man is created for fellowship in the family of God: fellowship first with God, and through that with all God's children. And that is the primary test that must be applied to every system that is constructed and every change in the system that is proposed. Does it help us nearer towards fullness and richness of personal fellowship? And fellowship, of course, is not merely the same thing as all getting together and agreeing with one another: it is compatible with a great deal of disagreement, and with a great deal of variety of experience.

Well, now, the real goods of life are all in personal qualities and personal relationships: the fullness of personal existence, the width of interest, spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, and the rest, and the relationships with our neighbours and our friends — these are the things which really constitute the substance of human life, to which apparatus of life, so to speak, begins to be extremely complicated, to maintain that subordination . . . These things claim so much attention during life that it is very difficult to remember that, after all, their whole value lies in the service they can render to something beyond themselves.

I like to think that Temple's earlier involvement with Toc H was one of the influences which led him to that insight, but however that may be he could have been writing it for Toc H in 1986, or, indeed, at any other time during its history. I hope we still have the courage to listen to him.

CRR

Welcome to Wellingborough

Carolyn Collins

Opposite the local cafe — Gino's — and between the probation service and the local Methodist Chapel you can discover the Wellingborough Toc H Community House. In this old family house there are now four residents, some of whom have been hoping and working for the opening of the house for nearly two years. Wellingborough, in the Northants District, is a good place for Toc H to have a community house, for the Movement is active in the town and the district — 12 Branches, one action group and a school group.

As a long term volunteer I live in the house, and my job is to develop our work in the community of Wellingborough. We are able to offer two community rooms — one of them equipped for catering — to a variety of other organisations. We also have a spacious cellar which has considerable potential, but still needs a lot of work to make it useable. It is our hope that, by involving as many local people as we can, our Community House will become as much a part of the life of Wellingborough as is Gino's cafe opposite!

If you ever visit Wellingborough you will always find a welcome at our house, and you may even get a cup of tea provided by one or more of the residents, who are:

Jackie — a part-time student, and volunteer at Service Six (a youth information and counselling service in Wellingborough).

Robert — a part-time student who, like Jackie, helps at Service Six.

Bill — an apprentice draughtsman at a local firm of shopfitters.

Carolyn — that's me — the LTV!



We all come from different backgrounds and between us we have a wide range of interests. Living together in this way is a new experience for all of us, and is not without its own challenges!

In addition to offering a service to the community the house is our home. We have on the ground floor a well equipped kitchen with an adjoining dining room. On the first floor are two bedrooms and a bathroom, together with our own lounge. Climb 16 stairs to the top floor and you will find two more bedrooms with their own bathroom. The house has been completely refurbished (with the exception of the cellar!) and we have



sufficient space in which to live our own lives.

Our purpose here in Wellingborough is to work out the Four Points in our daily living. We are committed to that, to living and growing together and spreading the light into the community. At the end of March that Light was certainly spread throughout the house during our service of dedication, as the residents, together with John Biggerstaff, distributed lighted candles to the Toc H members and the many young people who had come to join us. We were particularly glad that the Revd Ron Cottingham was able to officiate at the service, thus making it his final Toc H engagement before leaving for a new ministry on Ascension Island.

We do hope that you will be able to come and see us — and that our home will be a 'home from home' for you.

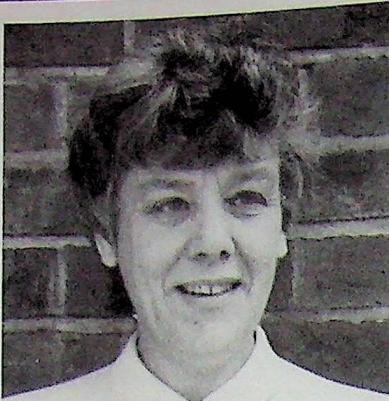


Who's Who at HQ? - Part Two



Alan Le Pere

As Finance and Properties Officer he has a general oversight of the financial situation together with the Treasurer. He is also concerned with properties owned by Toc H and insurance cover.



Joyce Leather

The mainstay of our cash-flow situation; Joyce as cashier ensures that all the cash coming in or going out heads in the right directions (most important to those of us claiming expenses!). She also looks after VAT problems.



Nicola Arnott

A secretary without particular ties at the moment, she worked for Frank Topping and will shortly become the personal assistant to the Director.



David Owen

The man to contact for all day to day financial matters: as Headquarters Administrator and a Departmental Head he makes the place tick.



Doreen Ellis

As personal assistant to Arthur Montgomery, Doreen is at the sharp end of a veritable stream of paperwork both in and out. She also provides secretarial support for the International Development Officer.



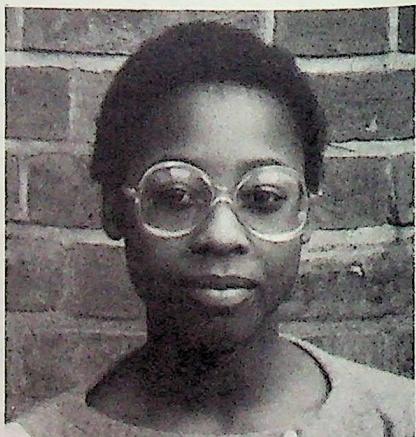
Joan Matthews

The personal assistant to Alan and David (she makes them both tick!) Joan is an integral part of the HQ administration. She has a particular responsibility for our car fleet and with routine insurance details.



Beryl Hallas and Val Robertson

Beryl and Val work part-time in the Finance Department assisting David and Joyce with accounts and computer work and recovering the tax on Deeds of Covenants.



Shirley Blake

Our most recent arrival on the staff, Shirley helps Barbara and Win with typing and clerical work.

This is the second of George Berry's two articles introducing the people and the faces at Headquarters. We hope that Wendover will no longer seem remote and impersonal!



John Mitchell

As from 1 July John is the Director of Toc H — to be based at Wendover, but travelling widely to keep in touch with the Movement. The two major roles of the Director are 'to guide the development of Toc H' and 'to promote a deeper understanding of Toc H both among membership and others'.



Arthur Montgomery

Our specialist in getting 'blood out of stones', Arthur is also responsible for giving Toc H a higher profile. His title is a mouthful 'Fundraising and Public Relations Officer'



Colin Rudd

Has assumed the mantle of Editor of *Point Three* since the elevation of John Mitchell to the Directorship. However, he continues as Chaplain at Cuddesdon House, and will still be involved in Quiet Days and Weekends. He is also now the Chaplain to Talbot House, Poperinge.

Round and about

'Collect-a-Spec' Appeal

For me to be without my glasses constitutes something of a disaster! Simply not to possess any would magnify that disaster enormously. Yet in many parts of the world people with deteriorating eyesight receive little or no help. In April actress Su Pollard launched Help the Aged national appeal for disused spectacles. The frames and lenses, together with old cases, will be sent to countries like Colombia, Africa and Poland.

If, like me, you have numerous pairs of glasses which you don't need any more and which are simply cluttering up a drawer somewhere, then clear yourself some space and take them along to either your local Help the Aged office, or to the nearest branch of Clement Clarke, the opticians — but please, don't send them to Wendover!

The Charles Palmer Trust

Selbourne Court, at Great Bromley in Essex, is an exciting new project providing residential care for the mentally handicapped. Run by the Charles Palmer Trust the aim of the project is to enable its residents to achieve their full dignity and independence. All 17 residents — most of whom have spent their lives in more traditional institutions — have their own furnished apartment, with fitted bathroom, their own toilet, own doorbell, own letterbox — and even their own headed stationery.

Those who work on the project tell us that they are very grateful for the consistent support which they have received from local Toc H groups.

South Africa's new Centre

Toc H has acquired a second national training and conference Centre in South Africa; The Willow Grange Centre near Estcourt in Natal was formerly a hotel and is the only Toc H Centre in the world to have its own swimming pool. It can accommodate 34 people, mostly in self-contained rondavels (round African-style buildings). It will be used for conferences, training weekends and Toc H-sponsored holidays for those in need. And, says national chairman Dion Roder: 'We extend an open invitation to members worldwide to come and stay there. The bracing air of the Drakensburg mountains and the lovely view of Natal Midland will surely make this the highlight of any visit.' Sounds very tempting.

Fulham Ladies go 'Pop'

Denise Moonen writes '*in April, five of us from the Fulham Ladies Branch included in a party of 12, leader John Burgess, journeyed by minibus and ferry to Talbot House, Poperinge, where we were warmly welcomed by Jacques Ryckbosch who is looking after Talbot House. The house is well cared for, warm with comfortable beds and wash basins in every room. We all shared doing breakfasts and lunches and it was like home from home. Our evening meals were taken at the De Renke Restaurant and were excellent.*

'Jacques has planted many bulbs in the garden, this will look lovely later on.'

'One evening the members of the Poperinge Toc H came to the house and we had a party. They are about 70 strong, including a large contingent of young people who have their own meetings and jobs. It was evident that they love the Old House, and we had a most enjoyable evening together, singing, among others, many of the old First World War songs around the piano.'

'We visited Bruges, Ypres and the Salient, including the Pool of Peace.'

'On the last day after our evening meal we went to the Menin Gate to hear the Ceremony of the Last Post, and on our return to the Old House, we all assembled in the Upper Room for a short service with readings from various members of the party, a very fitting ending to our stay at Talbot House.'

'It was a very peaceful few days which we spent and for those who have not visited the Old House, you should do so to see where our Movement started, and for those who have been before, go again and renew the friendship of the Old House. We must not lose our connections with Talbot House.'

From Salisbury to Suffolk

At 78 Doris Kiddle has decided that the time has come to resign from the Colne/Orwell District Branch. She joined Toc H in Salisbury, Rhodesia in the 1950s, then found herself becoming disabled. Far from giving up she continued an active life, involving herself both with Toc H and the Guide Movement. She came to England in 1980 and is now permanently confined to a wheelchair. Her story is one of triumph over all kinds of difficulties — and perhaps the real miracle lies precisely in its lack of uniqueness. Many others of all ages will be able to add their courage to hers, shown in her journey from Salisbury to Suffolk.

Round and about cont

David's Marathon success

David Norris of the Hatters TAG in Sheffield, whose plans to compete in the London Marathon were announced in our April issue, completed the run successfully in three hours, 45 minutes, 48 seconds, about half way down the field of 18,000. He even had sufficient energy left during the journey home to jot down his thoughts on a remarkable day.

'One weekend Colsterdale, the next London. What have I got myself into? Wake up at 6.15am - nervous. At 8.30 tension mounting. Raining at first but weather picks up at about 9.30. Prince Charles arrives by RAF helicopter and cannon goes off for the start. It takes ten minutes to arrive at start with nervous shouts of "Here we go" and "Hooray, hooray". Banners are swaying. Only 26 miles to go!'

'Passed Jimmy Savile at the 18 mile mark, and a hospital where they are waving things at us. The next eight miles have few spectators, but instead steel bands, sing-alongs and the can-can. Crowd clapping carry me through.'

'The last stretch along the Thames. Going strong. The crowds pushing you along.'

'Finish. Smiling, happy faces and medals, tin foil to wrap you in, glowing in the sun. My trainer (brother Bryan) gives me my track suit legs. Very tired by now. Did you see me on television?'

David adds his thanks to all those who sponsored him. Contributions total over £350 so far and will be divided between Toc H activities in Shefield and the Family Purse. Any reader whose contribution is still due - or who meant to sponsor David but didn't quite get round to it - can send a cheque payable to Toc H to Di Woodward, 116 Carterknowle Road, Sheffield, Yorkshire S7 2DZ.



Lunchtime in Mold

The Toc H Women's Branch in Mold (Clwyd) run a weekly Lunch Club. Gwyn Harvey writes: 'I commend the idea to

Australian welcome

This seems to be the month for tempting offers. If you decide to go on from Natal to Western Australia please note that Bill Brown has written to say that he would be delighted to welcome any UK members holidaying in Western Australia at Area HQ at 295 Roseby Road, Subiaco. He even gives telephone numbers so if you should be planning a trip out there be sure to contact the International Officer at Wendover beforehand.

Report from Buenos Aires

The Buenos Aires Branch is part of the ageing and dwindling British community in Argentine. 'Our Branch,' says secretary Luella Grant, 'consists of old age pensioners and the pensions are very small indeed. In fact most of us who are able to are doing extra work to make ends meet. Cost of living and taxes are very high. We meet once a month with an attendance of 10-12 and very often fewer'. But, though age may weary them, it does not seem to limit their activities. They hold an annual Christmas party for the elderly and prepare parcels for the residents of a home for the mentally ill and for people on the geriatric ward of the British Hospital. 'The one way in which Toc H makes money' writes Luella, 'is by holding a couple of bridge-canasta teas, thereby collecting money to help various charities. We visit the hospital and the mental homes. We help support a creche for unmarried mothers. We take in babies from 45 days to four years old. The babies are brought from eight in the morning to four in the afternoon, Mondays to Fridays. Some of us help at the second-hand clothes shop on Mondays. We all try to help wherever we can.'

Stamps for Lifeboats

Most people have visited a Lifeboat Station, partly out of curiosity and partly out of admiration for the dangerous work which the Lifeboat Service carries out. In the absence of Government backing fundraising is a constant and urgent need and one means employed is the sale of used stamps. If you have ever bought used Australian stamps from a Lifeboat Station there is a good chance that they will have come from Kenneth Jones in New South Wales. He is a Toc H member, formerly New Milton, who collects the stamps and sends them off - to a contact in Dartmoor Prison! There, prisoners soak off any bits of envelope, then sort and package the stamps for the RNLI. From the sale of his stamps Ken has recently been able to contribute 'a further £2,000 to the service'.

Ifield Hall

News from Clayton House and Ifield Hall is always eventful, but not every event is welcomed! In the very first edition of their new magazine is the report of a fire which destroyed not only their stored hay, but also the barn in which it was kept. Needless to say, rebuilding is proceeding apace, but it caused great difficulties in the Farm Unit and in the Riding School.

We offer our best wishes for the success of their new magazine and hope to see it often.

Publicity through history . . .

We frequently talk about the need to make Toc H better known. Partly this is a matter of being alert to all opportunities, however unlikely they may seem at first sight. Charles Brown, Cardiff Branch chairman, has found an unusual one. He secured an invitation to talk to the Penarth District Local History Society on the origin and activities of the Movement. And an account of his talk was spread over four columns of the *Penarth Times* - which is how we came to hear about it.

. . . and music

Fundraising, publicity and the encouragement of young musicians were all brought together by Saltash Branch in Cornwall. The Branch staged a concert by a choir of 70 drawn from local schools, accompanied by the South East Cornwall Stage Band. Not only did this concert provide an opportunity to introduce Toc H to a large group of young people and their parents, it also raised £200 for Toc H and local charities.

Personality Point

Congratulations to:

Alfred and Eva Akrill who have recently celebrated their Golden Wedding. Alfred has been a member for almost 50 years.



The following new members were registered during May:

John Anderson, James Simpson (Broughty Ferry M), Mr F J Garside, Harry A H Showler (Buckingham M), Mrs Rose Murphy (Chepstow W), Walter Hopkins (Cosby), Joseph Shorrock (Great

Harwood M), Mrs Joan M Jeffery (Hyth J), Charles B Webster (Ipswich M), Mrs Joan Whitby (Kidsgrove W), Mrs Fletcher, Mrs Mollie Foster, Mrs Edith Peirson (Nailsea W), Mrs Jean M Hannam (New Milton J), Mrs Edith Williams (North Ormesby J Grp), Tom F Richardson (St Annes on Sea J), Mrs Nellie Price (Sittingbourne J), David Hendy, Anthony Gibben (Troon M), Nigel Clarke, John A Dolan (Walsall M), Wilfred E West (Wellingborough M), Mrs Sheila Hillyer, Mrs Joyce Hitchens, William Hitchens, Mrs Betty A Pumell, Mrs Kathleen Williams (White Horse Vale District), David J Mead (Wulfrun J).

A warm welcome to 28 new members

A group of new members from Shavington at their meeting at Alison House just after Easter.

Forthcoming Events

July			August	
4-6	Photography Weekend, Kingsteignton, Devon	Open	2-9	Project 27, Mundesley Sandcastles Open
5-12	Project 10, Nature Care, Norfolk	Open	2-9	Project 28, St Michael's Cheshire Home, Axbridge Open
5-12	Holiday Week, Port Penrhyn	Open	2-9	Project 29, Playscheme at Lowestoft Open
5	N Wales & N West Regional REC	Open	2-16	Project 30, Token Project, Herts Open
5	Open Day, Ifield Hall, Crawley	Open	4-8	Project 46, Children's Holiday, Colsterdale Open
11-13	Project 11, Leckhampton	Open	6-27	Project 31, Munster Playscheme Open
11-13	Project 12, Talbot House, Poperinge	Open	9-16	Project 32, Happy Families, Mundesley Open
12	Southern Regional Council	Open	9-16	Project 33, Children's Camp, Blakeney Open
12-19	Project 13, With the Blind at Cuddesdon	Open	9-18	Project 34, Hitchin Hoot Open
12-18	Project 44, Mundesley, Norfolk	Open	9-23	Project 35, Holiday for Mentally Handicapped at Matlock Open
12-19	Toc H Summer School, Alison House	Open	11-22	Project 36, Playscheme at Saltburn-on-Sea Open
19-27	Project 14, Conservation with a Difference	Open	15-17	Photography/Painting weekend, Kingsteignton Open
19-26	Painting and Music Week, Cuddesdon	Open	15-22	Project 37, Princess Marina Centre, Bucks Open
19-26	Family Holiday Week for Beds, Bucks and Herts Area	Open	16-24	Project 38, Basingstoke Playscheme Open
21-28	Project 15, Off to the Hills	Open	16-30	Project 39, Sheffield Playscheme Open
21 approx	Project 16, Edinburgh	Open	19-24	Toc H Training and Video Week, Kingsteignton Open
23-13 Aug	Project 17, Berlin Playscheme	Open	26-30	A Little of What you Fancy! Kingsteignton Open
25-9 Aug	Project 18, Jane Hodge Home, Glamorgan	Open	29-31	Cycling Tour of Oxfordshire, from Cuddesdon Open
26-2 Aug	Project 19, With Mentally Handicapped Children, Mundesley	Open	30-6 Sep	Project 40, Mountain Rescue in South Wales Open
26-3 Aug	Project 20, Images	Open		
26-3 Aug	Project 21, Children's Holiday, Ashford	Open		
27-3 Aug	Project 22, 'Hill Skills', North Wales	Open		
28-4 Aug	Project 23, Leckhampton Lake clearance	Open		
28-1 Aug	Project 46, Children's Holiday, Colsterdale	Open		
28-10 Aug	Project 24, Exmouth Children's Holiday	Open	Sept 6	North Wales & North West REC
30-20 Aug	Project 25, Paderborn Playscheme	Open	19/20	South Western Regional Council at Kingsteignton
31-19 Aug	Project 26, Verden Playscheme	Open	26-28	Practical Drama weekend, Kingsteignton Open
			26-28	Quiet Weekend, Cuddesdon Open

FAIRMINDEDNESS

Help the Truth to Prevail

Betty Cornick

I have been privileged during more than 40 years to serve Toc H in various capacities. Throughout that time, though, I have been a member of a 'traditional' Branch, meeting weekly, and endeavouring in its life and activities to practise the Four Points of the Toc H Compass quietly, faithfully, and, despite inevitably advancing age, with that high-hearted happiness which we discovered in our Toc H infancy.

I am invited to contribute some thoughts from a traditional point of view and an interesting exercise it has proved to be, reminding me again of the words in Ecclesiastes — 'There is nothing new under the sun'.

The Points of the Compass cannot be separated; each is incomplete without the others; each is inextricably bound to the next in any order, forming a circular and indivisible whole. The Third Point, from which this journal takes its name, exhorts Toc H members to listen to the expert, to question him, to pay tolerant attention to everyman's story, to form their own convictions, while respecting the views of others; thus endeavouring to replace social, racial and credal antagonisms by loving and intelligent understanding.

That, with the other three Points, was set down in 1920. Is it any less necessary and relevant today? On the contrary, our world, our country, our neighbourhoods, many of our families, are riven by disputes; as the hymn says 'By schisms rent asunder'. The churches have not escaped divisions, nor, alas, has Toc H. One of the differences today compared with years ago is perhaps that we are more alive to these issues, we become more drawn into them, they make immediate demands upon our mental, emotional and physical energy, and we can respond to those demands in one of two ways. Either we opt out, accepting the 'I don't want to be involved' philosophy, seeking personal fulfilment in one of many other ways, or we ask ourselves 'Where do we fit into all this and what can we do about it?'

Others have written on Service, being a practical response to those questions. Fairmindedness is the mental and spiritual response, perhaps an essential precursor to Service.

I find the title of these two articles somewhat difficult. Surely fairmindedness

is fairmindedness yesterday, today and for ever. That quality and the need for it do not change. What have changed, of course, are the situations and circumstances in which fairmindedness needs to be applied today as compared with a generation or two ago.

Sometimes fairmindedness in Toc H has failed. I recall two illustrations told to me of Toc H between the wars. The first was when a member of the then Peace Pledge Union, a pacifist organisation, wanted to join the local branch and a founder member, an ex-soldier of World War One, with a distinguished record and a respected name for voluntary service, refused to accept him.

The other was when a member of the League of Women Helpers, the early Toc H Women's Movement, was horrified when another member brought along a friend who proved to be the 'daily help' of the first woman, who was heard to say, 'I couldn't possibly call her by her Christian name or allow her to use mine!'

Sounds silly now, doesn't it? Some, happily few, members of the early Toc H, with its already excellent reputation for Christian fellowship and service, found it difficult, and in those two cases impossible, to take fairmindedness that far. Before we misjudge hastily, however, we must remember the very different social conditions and norms which obtained in those days. Toc H, always an adventurous, innovative and challenging movement, was introducing and practising a quality of fairmindedness for which not everyone was yet ready.

Many members will recall the furore of the Sixties when Integration was the burning issue. Integration, for newer members who will find it hard to believe, was merely the joining together, chiefly for administrative purposes, of the men's and women's halves of a movement which had called itself a family from the beginning. Feelings ran so high that a number of men members left Toc H rather than accept what they viewed as a takeover. If that debate were taking place now, I like to think that its progress would be very different.

We have all known other breakdowns of fairmindedness, but for all that I believe the adage 'the exception proves the rule' applies here. The examples I have cited were, I am sure, exceptional, for beneath

Searching for Truth

Tim Day

The four blind men were sitting in a circle around an elephant whilst the sage stood nearby. The first man rose and walked forward with his arms outstretched and touched the elephant's trunk.

'The elephant is like a big snake,' said the man, satisfied with his discovery. He returned to his place and the second man went to the elephant. He touched its side. 'No, No,' he cried, 'the elephant is like a wall.' The third man touched the elephant's tail and said, 'You are both wrong, it's like a piece of string.' The fourth touched its ear and proclaimed, 'You are all foolish, the elephant is like a giant fan.'

The four men argued for some time until they were interrupted by the sage. 'You are all foolish men' he said, 'you have all perceived different parts of the whole animal. It is all those things and more. Learn from each other's experiences of the elephant and you will be nearer to the truth of what the elephant is.' The blind men fell silent and considered.

We are all like those four blind men in this adaption of a children's story. We see a part of what is real and out of laziness and for convenience we assume that it is all of the reality. For example, there are those who believe that the unemployed are lazy because if they wanted to work then they would find a job. This conviction may stem from having known one or two people who were both lazy and unemployed so it may safely be said to be true of some people who are out of work. It cannot, however, fairly be said

any surface tension of that nature had grown up a unique level of acceptance of man for man, a love which tolerated others' awkwardnesses and cussednesses, while always being aware of his own, knowing that all were needed to achieve the rich mixture which Toc H has always sought.

So much for yesterday; what of today, this age of instant communication, when, whether we want to or not, we know so much of what is happening everywhere. It requires few minutes to call to mind just some of the major controversial issues of our time: apartheid, the Middle East, the arms race, social deprivation, Northern Ireland, unemployment, whether the

In the third of our series of the Four Points, two members explore the challenge of Fairmindedness. Betty Cornick has been an active member of Toc H in the Southern Region for many years, and is a past chairman of the CEC. Tim Day is a member of staff in the South Eastern Region. Before that he was a Long Term Volunteer working with Peter East at Talbot House in London.

of the multitude of unemployed people, many of whom are actively and desperately seeking occupation.

Not only does this example illustrate how we are prone to seeing only part of the truth, but it also illustrates our proclivity to categorise, package and pigeon hole our concepts. Try an experiment. Complete these sentences without thinking too hard:

'A table is'
 'A coconut is'
 'A Londoner is'
 'A Toc H member is'

Whatever you have said, you may rest assured that others will have some of the same, some different and some additional concepts connected with the objects or people mentioned. To me, for example, a table could primarily mean 'each of two bony layers of skull' or 'a list of facts arranged in columns', two genuine definitions. If, to you, it is primarily a piece of furniture then we can clearly see where confusion arises in conversation. The context in which a word is used may guide us to similar, but not identical, concepts of its meaning. Thus language is a poor method of communication but remains the best which we have. We simply need to treat it with care.

Throughout our lives we necessarily form concepts of 'truth' from our experience and these become our personal and, often immovable, reality. This raises the question - 'What is real?'

To return to the elephant story, we can see clearly the folly of the blind men in their attempt to answer the question, 'What is an elephant?'. But we are equally prone to the same foolishness. Do we remember to think about the inside of the elephant? Do we know what

it is thinking or feeling? Could there be anything to do with 'elephant' which exists but which we are incapable of perceiving? If so, then we cannot be certain of knowing what the elephant is in its complete reality. However detailed a concept one may have of the meaning of 'elephant', it may be little closer to the truth than to say 'the elephant is like a giant fan'.

Reality is existence, and one may only see part of it. We are the blind men in the story - or are we? There is an assumption being made, and that is of the independent existence of the elephant. It exists independently of my believing it to exist. The elephant is and I am striving to discover what, how and why it is. So, then, the assumption needs to be challenged.

All I know is that I am conscious. This is the only certain and unquestionable reality and all the rest is belief. I may have created a framework within which the 'I' can exist and be conscious - the world, the elephant and you, but they may not be an independent reality. In other words, the elephant is exactly what I believe it to be at any given time, no more and no less, because it is my own creation. The total reality of the elephant is that it is 'like a giant fan' while I believe it to be so. This belief is one to which neither I nor many people subscribe, but we can never know of the independent reality of the elephant, we can only believe in it. All I know is that I am conscious.

So,
 'ALL I know is that I am conscious'
 'I believe that there is existence beyond my creation of it, that there is independent reality'
 'I treat that independent existence and

proposed local by-pass (which naturally we all want) should pass my garden, whether a treatment centre for alcoholics or ex-prisoners should be opened in my street, sometimes Toc H's conduct of its own affairs. You will identify others, the list is long, and my fellow-writers in this series will perhaps suggest ways in which fairmindedness can be exercised in some of these contemporary contexts.

We value our freedom to think, to speak, to write, to argue, to vote. At the same time, my own view is that, while listening to the 'experts' - and how they abound! - we should not be afraid to form our own convictions and to abide by them. Of course we must respect the views and

my own consciousness as reality or 'truth' in order to provide an identifiable framework for my life.'

This raises the issue of the nature of 'truth'. Edward de Bono, in his book *'The Happiness Purpose'*, talks of Absolute Truth and ProtoTruth. He sees the former as 'perfect and unchangeable - and hence arrogant'. It is indeed arrogant if it is accepted that all I know is that I am conscious and all else is simply belief. ProtoTruth, de Bono says, is truth which is always ready for change, open to questioning and development, but is treated as absolutely true while it lasts.

Each of the four blind men thought that they had found the absolute truth when they touched the different parts of the elephant. By arguing they exhibited an unwillingness to adapt and change their perceptions. Each had arrived at what he thought was true, and was sticking to it regardless. They would have made more progress had they listened to each other and learned from their various perceptions and experiences.

This is the nature of fairmindedness. It is concerned with the finding of one's own personal truth, whilst always being willing to listen to the views of others. It allows for change and growth. It welcomes experiences which change perceptions of the world. It is the open and receptive mind which can say with sincerity:

'I know almost nothing, but I believe much, and I treat my beliefs as true until they are shown not to be.'

Fairmindedness today is, and always has been, a method of searching after truth and a recognition that others have as valid a perspective on reality as we have ourselves.

pledged to face problems . . . and to look for solutions in terms which do not betray our belief in personal values'.

In the original Four Points of the Compass we were urged to '*help the truth to prevail!*'. Truth, sadly, becomes abused and distorted, but it will, I believe, be helped to prevail by courageous thinking and acting. Goethe put it this way:

*'We are not here to play, to dream, to drift,
 We have hard work to do and loads to lift:
 Shun not the struggle, face it.
 'tis God's gift.'*

That is my experience and conviction.

I suggest that the basic question is 'Should the transmission of Toc H to the younger generation become our major commitment, and if so, is a major development of "Project" work a good way to do that?'

I would argue that the first part of this question is easily answered, and for me the answer must be Yes. One has only to look at what our forbears in Toc H said and wrote to see that they all saw that Toc H existed to 'transmit a spirit'. The very word 'transmit' appeared in the first statement of Aims and Objects, in which it was said that Toc H existed '*to preserve . . . and to transmit to future generations*' the tradition of fellowship and service etc. In a frequently quoted comment, Tubby exhorted us to '*sweat blood to get Toc H into young men*', and there are numerous other instances of leaders in Toc H reiterating that we have a duty to 'pass it on' to the coming generations.

From a rather different perspective, Tom Gulliver, until recently a staff member, wrote two articles in Point Three some years ago, which were later reprinted under the title 'The Dominating Claim'. In this he demonstrated that, whatever the social problem, the age range of 16-25 was the most at risk — Unemployment, Abortion, Marital Breakdown, Drug Abuse, or whatever, it was the younger folk who were most at risk. So, Toc H needs young people, but I suggest we should do this more because young people need what Toc H can offer. If I may again quote Tubby, he once said about '*the younger people coming up*' . . . '*We cannot wrap them in cotton wool; we cannot hope to curb them by any negative rule; but once we enlist them in a cause which gives them each a real responsibility, we have done more to straighten out their lives than could be done by any multitude of cautionary tales*'. That I believe is what we must do, because the need of the new generation for Toc H is even more urgent than the need we have of them.

The second part of the question raises the question 'How?' and I am sure this will generate much discussion, sometimes fierce no doubt, but hopefully charitable! The proposals focus on Project development as the best way of doing the 'transmitting'. I am sure there will be argument — after all, most of us are human enough to feel that the bits of Toc H we came into, and which we know best, are in fact the best bet! However, I would ask everyone to recognise that, as a method of meeting new, young people, the Projects work over 25 years has been unparalleled; its weakness has

Towards the New Generation

Part One John Mitchell

Background

At the 1985 Central Council, a number of challenging resolutions were carried. One of these focussed on the area of Toc H work, 25 years old this year, which we call 'Projects'. It was, in fact, the first formal recognition by Council of the important place this work has in the life of Toc H, but also a recognition that it should be improved and developed. The actual wording was '*that this Council reaffirms its belief that the short-term, residential "project" is an important aspect of Toc H life today, and instructs the Central Executive Committee to take all necessary steps to encourage the growth of this work, the broadening of the recruitment base, the broadening of the types of project, and improved follow-up of participants*'. It was carried unopposed. This article takes up the story from that point.

The CEC response:

In response to this instruction, the CEC commissioned Adrian Dudman (formerly our General Secretary) to undertake a major investigation into the whole question. Over a three month period in early 1986 he did this, assisted by Judi Edwards (Projects Development Officer) and in the process consulted widely. He then presented his report to the April meeting of the CEC.

The report fell into three natural parts. The first was a detailed analysis of the state of Toc H today, and this was set against various recent policy statements, such as 'The Way Forward' and the 1984 Development Strategy. It is quite impossible in a brief article such as this to cover it adequately but, at the risk of oversimplifying, the conclusion was that while there is much of great value in Toc H today, and real signs of encouragement, there is also need for a major national initiative to transmit Toc H to newer and younger people, and in the process to aid the recovery of confidence.

The second part of the report recommended that we should therefore take steps for a major development of the whole 'Projects' programme (along the lines envisaged in the 1985

Resolution) and that this should be the main thrust of Toc H work for the next five years.

The third section of the report outlined a number of specific, co-ordinated proposals to put this into effect. These would include the recruitment of extra staff for this initiative, the setting up of a national 'Projects Centre', the establishment of some form of 'Projects Forum' with wide representation, a review of all staff briefs, and so on — and would entail the spending of a considerable sum of money to effect it. Not least among the reasons behind these proposals was the need to radically improve 'follow-up' of these young people, many of whom at present only have a fleeting contact with Toc H, so that they may be more deeply challenged, and become more deeply committed.

The next steps:

The CEC received this Report with gratitude and a good deal of enthusiasm. It felt, clearly, that proposals for such a major initiative in fact constituted a piece of policy, and as such should go to the 1986 Central Council, in November, for adoption. To prepare for that, it set up a small steering group, charged to involve a representative from each Region, and to:

- a. Formulate the necessary Resolutions to be put to Council, and
- b. Do some serious forward thinking about the 'mechanics' so that, if Council approve these ideas, we don't spend the next few months scratching our heads about how to go about them!

In my new role as Director it seems obvious that I should be closely involved with these preparations. The steering group has been kind enough to give me permission to write articles in this, and next month's, Point Three, so that we can start the discussion as soon as possible. I should stress that these articles have not been 'vetted' by them, so they are not to blame!

In the next issue I hope to share more details about the specific proposals, but it would be premature at this stage before the steering group has got down to detail. That may be a good thing though, as it means I must stick to the wider issue.

been that it has not always been able to continue to challenge and involve young people to a point where they become really committed. That is something we must work on and improve, (and the proposals recognise that very firmly) and if we do, the sky's the limit!

Not a policy for uniformity!

I am anxious members are clear what this is NOT! It is NOT suggesting that every penny will go this way, that all staff become youth workers, or that all Branches must 'convert' to Projects work, as we were 'converted' to North Sea Gas a few years ago! God forbid! It remains fundamental that local Toc H units work out their own Toc H commitment locally, knowing local conditions and needs, and the talents of the members of the group. That must remain, and any attempt to interfere with that and try and dictate a certain type of Toc H work would be entirely wrong.

However, it does not contradict that to say that the Central Council does have a responsibility to give the CEC directions as to the priorities they should have in deciding the best use of resources (be it money, staff-time or whatever). That is what the proposals do. It also does not contradict it to say that the Council does have a duty to give a lead to the wider Movement when it feels that is necessary. That, too, is what these proposals are about. I am sure all Branches will be encouraged to consider whether they can help with this initiative, but encouragement and invitation are not to be confused with compulsion. In any event, to say that the transmitting of Toc H to the young, in this way, is most important is NOT to say that other work, other expressions of Toc H, are unimportant. Far from it. Toc H must remain a mixture of people. A clear lead from the Central Council is quite compatible with the essential 'mixture' of Toc H.

A full debate

I do hope there will be a real, lively debate about this between now and November. Even before Councillors get their Agendas for Council, and read the actual Resolutions, there can be discussion with them on what I write here, and will share in August.

I am anxious that, if Council does accept the proposals, and the practical implications, it will be with real assent, happily given, from the whole Movement. For that to happen requires a lot of thought, discussion, patience and prayer. I hope members will give it that, so that if these proposals are adopted, there is a real commitment to their success.

We will Remember...

We regret to announce the death of the following members:

In 1985/6 – not previously recorded:
Miriam E Baxter (Derby District)
Mary Bowns (Thurcroft (Rotherham))
Winston J Christie (Broughty Ferry)
Dora Cole (Plymstock), Daniel A Cruttenden (Medway & Sheppey District)
Michael G Drakeford (Hythe)
Mary Furzeland (Plympton), James E G Gale, (Chippenham), Lucy E C Gunn (Derby District), Mrs D Key (Thurcroft (Rotherham)), Edith M Peel (Eltham)
Enid H Pollard (Swannington), Edward J Saunders (Ruislip), Ellen Smithhurst (Thurcroft (Rotherham)), May Stemp (Uxbridge), Alfred J Taylor (South East Essex District).

In February

Walter Thynne (Wolds District)

In March

Eleonore F Allaire (St Helier (Jersey))
E 'Percival' Cole (St Helier)
Agnes E Duffill (Bexhill on Sea)

In April

Raymond T Baker (Felpham), Kathleen M Brunner (Southport), Fred Dickinson (Wortley-de-Leeds), Gladys E Fulks (Watford), Ernest F Goodman (Coney Hall), Doris E Jones (Cheltenham)

In May

Alice A Loader (Loddon Vale District)
Amy E Robertson (Cheadle Hulme)
Stanley W Stock (Knowle)
E Margaret Thorne (Merseyside District)
Marjorie V Vickery (Richmond).

Due to pressure of space, the Editor usually has to reduce the length of tributes sent in – and will continue to do so unless the author specifically requests 'All or nothing'!

Bill Robinson, who died in November, had been secretary of Wroughton's Men's Branch for many years. 'He was a lovable character', writes Fred Davis, 'and we miss him very much'.

Gertie Burns, who died in February, was a member of Birkenhead Branch and on its closure became a founder member of Bromborough Branch.

Phyllis Dredge tells us that 'Gladys Fulks was a founder member and Pilot of Watford (W) Branch, and was largely responsible for keeping Toc H alive in Bushey during the Second World War and transferring the small group to Watford where the Branch flourished under her wise guidance. Her sincerity and keen sense of humour were a delightful combination and many Watford members were originally attracted to Toc H by her qualities'.

Horace 'Steve' Stevens had been a stalwart member for more than 40 years, and during that time he held the position of Branch Pilot for several years, a post he was eminently fitted for in view of his strong Christian views. He applied himself with enthusiasm in seeking to further the objects of the Movement. Above all, he cared about people and for many years it was his practice to cycle to the local hospital and visit folk he knew and any others who required visiting. This, and many other acts of kindness, were typical.

Stanley Stock, a member of Toc H for nearly 40 years was a founder member of Knowle (Bristol) Men's Branch. He will be remembered by all who knew him as one who would always find time to listen to others' troubles and ever ready to help. Stan was indeed a great friend and a very loyal Toc H member.

We give thanks for their lives



Congratulations to Bournemouth and Christchurch Branch, who have recently celebrated their 14th birthday. Among their guests was the Mayor of Christchurch who, among her other duties, cut the cake.

Open Forum

The Ordination of Women

I find myself surprised by the letters opposing the ordination of women, coming supposedly from Toc H members.

Their argument seems to be based on statements made nearly 2,000 years ago when the conditions of all people, particularly women, were quite different to the way things are in Britain now. In conversation with one of those writers he referred me to St Paul writing to Timothy where St Paul says: '*Women should listen and learn quietly and humbly. I never let women teach men or lord it over them. Let them be silent in your church meetings. Why? Because God made Adam first . . .*' and so on. What better example can there be of male chauvinism?

What puzzles me most is that Toc H people can take this view. I read somewhere that Toc H exists '*to lessen prejudices that divide us*' – '*to replace antagonism with intelligent understanding*'

In Toc H men and women integrated in 1971. It is high time this happened in the Church at all levels. When one of the writers says '*if this change were introduced we should find the ground . . . cut from under our feet*' I say let the ground be cut and, if we must, let us find some other route to Jesus.

Evan Jones
Cardiff

I was encouraged to read Ken Prideaux-Brun's Editorial in February showing how deeply he has thought about the leadership of women in the Church of England and putting forward valuable points to help others to think. I am increasingly discouraged by replies from several members in April and May who are seemingly so averse to change of any kind that they find it impossible even to consider another point of view.

The General Synod in 1975 began to move towards changing tradition when it agreed a motion 'that there are no fundamental theological objections to the ordination of women to the priesthood'. At that time, although on the agenda via the Anglican Consultative Council since 1971, the subject was thought such a radical one that it was considered that 'the time was not ripe' for action. Much has happened since then; the need for a liturgy suited to our times and sensitive to the needs of men and women who long to feel more closely in touch with God through a language which is familiar to them has been met; there are more women Readers and more non-stipendiary priests; deaconesses are in charge of parishes and hold Chaplaincies in

Hospitals and Universities. Upwards of 600 women have been ordained priests world-wide; last year the General Synod agreed that women may be made deacons on the same terms as men.

The sadness to me of the whole situation is that division in a Christian body should be suggested at all. Tragic too, that women who feel a vocation to full ministry are denied the opportunity of exercising their ministry fully, using their gifts which are complementary to those of men. The two in partnership could enrich the church immeasurably. Ken made the point that the church has to come to terms with a God who transcends male and female. Is not this what we have to work at, to understand and to accept?

I look to Jesus in the Gospels and His treatment of both men and women as individuals, children of God with a valuable part to play in the community. Put in the background of His times, when women had little status outside the home and were segregated in the synagogue where they could hold no office, it is thrilling to read of the many women who were, I quote, 'with Him', 'ministered to Him', 'followed Him' and to whom He gave friendship in equal measure as He did to His men disciples. After His Resurrection He appeared first to a woman and told her to go and tell the others. St John tells us (4:7) of the Samaritan woman at Jacobs well and Jesus' conversation with her. He adds that when the disciples came 'they marvelled that He was talking to a woman', but apparently they did not question it – they were learning from Him all the time.

I ask members to think fairly before they make up their minds on this issue in one way or another. I remind them that growth is the evidence of life. Change is the only evidence of growth. Change and growth mean risk.

Elisabeth Worth
Stroud, Glos

Fellowship Today

I enjoyed reading the two articles on Fellowship in May's edition of *Point Three*, each of which made me smile, remember, think, and act! They prompted me to examine my own feelings about fellowship in the expressions of Toc H in which I am involved, and my responsibility in offering fellowship to others. It is valuable to re-examine one's own understanding of the Four Points of the Compass in relation to our activities.

There is one point I would like to make. Dick Stayman mentions some of

the myths in Toc H today, and in his article there is a not uncommon myth that I believe needs to be exploded! Dick mentions: '... projects, which really is another name for what we used to call "jobs".' This is not accurate! In Toc H terminology the word 'project' is used to describe a short-term residential experience with a task attached. That is very different from a regular Branch job without the residential element. Fellowship certainly exists in both, neither one is more valuable than the other, but they are different. Both the Branch job and the project are true expressions of Toc H from which different group experiences and different truths about oneself and others emerge.

I recommend that your readers try both!

Judi Edwards
Projects Development Officer

Mundesley Mixture

Is it a cocktail or a medication you may be asking? It was both on 3 May when 16 Toc H'ers (12 from Beds & Herts, four from Northants) set off for Norfolk. Arriving at Mundesley on a warm, sunny afternoon to start a week living together as a Toc H family. Mundesley House somehow feels right for such a way of life – true to the word DOMUM over the lounge fireplace. We were self-catering with Pat Turner as our chef, and teams of washers-up/table setters/sandwich makers very willingly doing jobs to a rota. We talked, walked, fed, laughed and explored our way through a very happy week. Church on Sunday morning; feeding the ducks on the Mill Pond; walks along the cliffs; admiring the beautiful houses and gardens; going across to the historic Royal Hotel for drinks and two evening meals. Outings included a day in Norwich, a ride on the Sheringham Poppy Line and a visit to the Shire Horse Centre. Wearing a Toc H sweatshirt I made purchases at the Cromer Lifeboat Station and the Lifeboatman on duty asked 'would you please watch the stall for a minute while I go to fill the kettle, I've been waiting for someone I can trust'. There are lots of other personal memories and we will all often chuckle about a port chop, handbag and a black dog.

Trevor and Pat Sizer and family live in the bungalow just behind the hedge and their elder son Mark is busy caring for the lawns and grounds around the four properties on the wooded site. Trevor, Pat and Mark joined us for the evening meal on Friday and stayed on for the visit of Mundesley Branch and their

Opinions expressed in these columns (including any editorial comment) are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement. We reserve the right to edit letters. Only letters carrying the correspondent's full name and address will be considered for publication.

wives, when we had an informal Toc H meeting of getting to know one another with a version of the Radio Game 'Just a minute'. We felt that Mundesley House rekindles the spirit of the old Warden Manor, others thought of the fellowship of Dor Knap. The Mundesley Mixture was certainly a medication after the long Winter and a cocktail of Toc H intoxication.

Nelson and Freda Parker
Rushden

Friendship Circles

Referring to the editorial comment in the April edition of *Point Three*. We read with indignation, surprise and alarm, a quote from Ann Crouch that Friendship Circles do not use volunteers. We wonder then how, for the past ten years, our group has operated with efficiency, support and friendship, if not because of the total dedication of the volunteers.

It is true we are all members of one Friendship Circle on equal terms, regarding loyalty and mutual understanding, but our group would not be the happy and welcoming place it is today, and always has been, without the leadership and practical help given by those same volunteers.

We are emphatic that our Circle would not survive without these ladies on whom we rely so much, and we feel that the article is an insult to their devoted work over the years. We feel sure that other volunteers in other circles will be equally offended by such an implication of their non existence, and we hope Mrs Crouch will have the good grace to retract this comment and offer an apology.

Members of Stockton I
Friendship Circle

I would like to reply on behalf of Toc H Thornaby to Ann Crouch's remarks on Friendship Circles.

Unlike MIND not all our members have had mental problems, although a great many have. They all have one thing in common - they require support and the knowledge they are important as human beings.

Ann says these groups are self help groups, and this we try to be. However, to maintain continuity, volunteers are needed and volunteers there certainly are. People springing to mind are the real founders of this Movement who ten years plus on are still working and working very hard. Bill Bains, Mrs Ena Handley and Bessie Wilson, not forgetting the man whose dream started it all in the beginning, the most dedicated staff man I have ever met, Mr Adrian Dudman. As the Movement has expanded of course we have had to have paid staff but what is their function? We now have two staff members, MSC staff and a supervisor to supervise the MSC, plus of course the inevitable computer and the endless expensive paper-work that goes with it. How many of the staff at Major Street know the names of members never mind their individual problems - how can they know their volunteers. Unfortunately this is how a little empire is born isolated from all it is about.

This Friendship Circle is run by Toc H members and through the help of the Circle Toc H has benefitted from a loan of £500. Cystic Fibrosis, Multiple Sclerosis, the Blind and many organisations have benefitted by many thousands of pounds. Toc H could do worse than have Friendship Circles but it does need dedicated people. We have them and after ten years hope to still

have them for this Movement but, please Ann, let's have credit where credit's due, or you may annoy them.

David Pearson
Stockton

Note:

The new Editor has kindly allowed me to make some comments on these letters, and I appreciate the opportunity.

1. I am saddened that members at Stockton and Thornaby felt Ann's comments were insulting. Insofar as Friendship Circles are groups of people in which everyone is present 'on equal terms', all contributing what they can, they are true to Toc H at its best. Too often we see the divide between 'Volunteer' and 'client', and it is exciting when Toc H groups really blur that distinction. If Ann had said 'everyone is a volunteer' it might have been more acceptable, but nothing Ann wrote seemed to me to imply that there were not dedicated people in Friendship Circles, helping others.

2. All Toc H units are autonomous to a very high degree. This is true of Friendship Circles, so it is not surprising if, in different groups, different emphasis appears.

3. I have had extensive talks with various people, including Adrian Dudman, on this issue. From this it is quite clear that the concept Ann outlined is accepted by, and operating in, the great majority of Friendship Circles. It is a basic tenet of Toc H that we seek to do things 'with, not for' people, and to enable everyone to make a contribution to the whole. It is because Friendship Circles embody that philosophy that they are, for me, full expressions of Toc H, and not just aspects of Toc H Service.

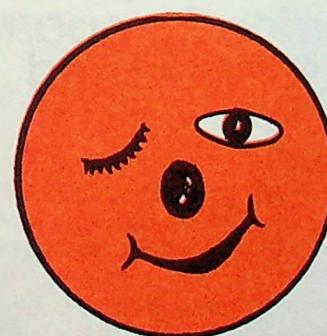
John Mitchell
Director

A thank you to friends

It was with sadness that I read Joyce De Levante's letter in Open Forum. I agree with her that it is a privilege to be a member, but why, oh why, does she have to become an outsider. I know and sympathise with her feeling, for no-one knows more than I what it means to be on the outside and not to belong.

Surely somewhere within the great wisdom of the 'Toc H Upper Hierarchy' there must be some simple way out of this impasse without leaving 'our' Joyce out in the Wilderness.

Bill Jack
Port Talbot



THE SUNNY SUMMER SHOW

Have you applied for a project and been disappointed? The Sunny Summer Show in Glenrothes, Fife, needs you! It's urgent! So if you're free at any time between Saturday 5 July and Saturday 16 August write to: Jenny Saunders, 47/48 Greenlaw Crescent, Glenrothes, Fife, or telephone her on Glenrothes 759003 or 754670.

Bordon Letter

In 1956 a few Toc H members of various denominations met for a weekend retreat at Bordon in Hampshire. Their concern that Toc H members should be encouraged to reflect deeply on the work they do within Toc H led, among other things, to the production of a regular quarterly 'Bordon Letter' which continues to this day.

Toc H is...

Rudolf Loewy

Congratulations to whoever wrote the excellent statement of what Toc H is, which appeared on the back cover of the projects booklet (and, of course, congratulations for the excellent presentation of the projects in the new booklet). My first reaction was: this is the best ever statement of what Toc H is. And I wondered if it ought not to be reproduced as a one page leaflet, like Frank Rice's excellent 'What is Toc H?' However, on further reflection, I realise that while it is excellent for the audience for which it is intended — volunteers — it is not an adequate answer for everyone, or about the whole of Toc H.

There is a telling phrase I came across some years ago which seems to me to go to the heart of the matter — 'Toc H is not to do welfare work but to discover and transmit a way of life'. Of course its very brevity and depth of hidden meaning makes this statement also not suitable for everyone. It may also sound high-flown and nebulous, but it is precisely how and why Toc H started. Those who counted themselves lucky to have survived the horrors of the Western Front in the First World War and who in the midst of these dangers experienced the peace, joy and mutual support of the Old House felt themselves immensely privileged to have discovered this saving grace, which made even the war bearable, (read *Tales of Talbot House* and *Plain Tales from Flanders*). In consequence they were

impelled when the war ended to try and pass on this profound experience and way of life, a life in which they '*checked all bitterness, disowned discouragement, and leapt with joy to any task for others*'. And so they determined to continue this strong fellowship in peace time, and Toc H as a Movement for everyone was born.

They were following a much, much older group, who also had found a wonderful new way of life. These people also, after the death of their leader, felt impelled to spread the good news '*to the ends of the earth*' — drawing in countless new disciples who in their turn proceeded to transmit this way of life.

How they did it, we have read in the New Testament; how our founder members did it, we have experienced as we were drawn into the Movement, or have read in *The Birth of a Movement*, and *The Years Between*; And it is up to us to do the same as they did. Of course it's not easy. The matter is so deep that you cannot confront every person with it all, but depending on who the enquirer is and on the opportunity you have, some indication of the deep purpose of Toc H ought to be given, even if sometimes only a hint may be possible or desirable at that stage. And at all times we are bidden to do so '*with gallant and high-hearted happiness*' — that is, to do so courageously and joyfully — because building the Kingdom of God in the wills of men (for that's what transmitting this way of life means) is the finest thing we can do on earth.



The Central Executive Committee at work during one of its weekend meetings at Cuddesdon. Next year's CEC will be elected at Central Council in November, and nominations are due by 15 August. The only candidates in the election will be the ones you nominate!

At Cuddesdon

Painting and Music Weeks

19-26 July 25 October-1 November

There are still a few vacancies on both of these weeks. You don't have to be an expert, just willing to have a go and enjoy yourself.

Cost to residents: £75.

Campers are welcome in the July week.

Please write to The Revd C R Rudd, Toc H Headquarters, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT, for further information.

Cycling Tour of Oxfordshire

29-31 August

Not quite the Tour de France — but if you would like to spend a few days cycling around a corner of Oxfordshire and returning to the luxury of Cuddesdon House each night, write to: Leslie Warman, 22 Coveham Crescent, Cobham, Surrey KT11 1AP.

Enjoy an Autumn Break with Herts, Beds & Bucks!

We are having a weekend at Cuddesdon on 12, 13 and 14 September 1986. The cost of the weekend will be £25 and the leader will be Adrian Dudman.

If you would like to join us please send £5 deposit to Joan Croft, 22 Hawthorn Way, St Albans.

See you there!

Bordon Company Quiet Weekend

26-28 September 1986

The leader will be the Revd Peter Dewey, who is the Bishop of Oxford's Officer for Relationships with other World Faiths. The title of his weekend is 'Our relationship with God' — a Christian approach to other World Faiths'.

Cost: £27.50

For details please apply to: The Revd C R Rudd, Toc H HQ, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT

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Please write or telephone for further information to:

Clare & David Currant
Corndene, Coreley
Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 3AW
Tel: Ludlow (0584) 890325



DON'T LOSE TOC-H

12-14 September 1986

If you met Toc H through a project, and have no Toc H involvement locally, then this event is for you. Come and spend a weekend at Mundesley working on one of the newest Toc H centres.

- Find out what Toc H does in other parts of the country
- Support a Toc H centre
- Spend a weekend by the sea

If you fancy getting absolutely filthy by doing a spot of decorating, and can cope with sleeping under canvas, then you'll love it!

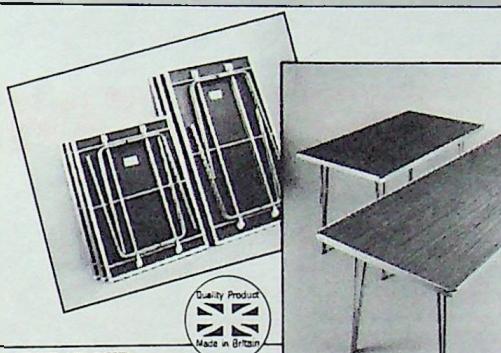
Send firm bookings with £10 (total cost) to secure your place, to:

Judi Edwards
Project Development Officer
Toc H Headquarters, 1 Forest Close
Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT

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Small Ads

Small advertisements must be received (with remittance) five weeks before publication day, which is the 23rd of the preceding month. The charge is 5p a word (minimum 50p) plus VAT, to Point Three Magazine. Rates of display advertisements can be obtained from the Editorial Office, Toc H, 1 Forest Close, Wendover. Telephone: 0296 623911.

Back cover

The back cover is drawn from the new Colsterdale leaflet which was designed by students at Dewsbury & Batley Technical & Art College.

Jaywick, Clacton, Essex. Sea wall chalet, ideal for two adults, can sleep three. Car parking available, near shops. All electric. April to October £32 pw. Apply: Miss Nicholls, 38 Kings Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex.

Conwy. B & B from £8. Dinner optional. Walking, touring, sea, mountains, on the edge of beautiful Snowdonia. Doreen and Bill Baxter, Llys Gwilym Guest House, 3 Mountain Road, Cadnant Park, Conwy, Gwynedd, N Wales. Tel: 049 263 2351.

Holiday accommodation, Falmouth. Toc H House, modernised, well appointed. Five adults and cot. Convenient for beaches and town. £55 per week. Vacancies from 6 September onwards. Gatiss, Falmouth 312689.

Raise funds quickly, easily. Superb ball-pens, combs, key fobs, diaries, etc gold stamped to your requirements. Details: Northern Novelties, Bradford BD1 3HE.

All about COLSTERDALE

The Colsterdale Centre is a former stone farmhouse, seven miles from Masham near Ripon, North Yorkshire, which Toc H members and their friends have adapted and equipped as an activity and training centre.

It is available for use by groups of people both inside or outside the Toc H Movement and, situated at the head of a quiet and secluded Pennine dale, it provides an ideal venue for a variety of activities - discussion groups, training or study sessions or projects involving children, single parent families, the mentally handicapped etc.

It is open throughout the year and will accommodate, on a self catering basis, mixed parties of 28 people. There are 3 bedrooms each sleeping 8 persons, plus a leaders room sleeping 4, in bunk beds. Downstairs there is a combined changing and drying room, lounge, dining room and a kitchen with large capacity Calor gas cooker and grill and all necessary cooking equipment and crockery. There is a separate pantry, commodious refrigerator and a washing machine. There are also ample toilet, washing and shower facilities.

Each party must provide its own leaders who will be responsible for the conduct of the party and for all activities and domestic arrangements. Advice and assistance is also available from the resident Warden. Visitors should bring their own towels, sheets or sleeping bags and pillow cases. Strong walking shoes and waterproof clothing are also recommended. We regret pets are not allowed.

Applications for reservations should be made to the Centre. It is often helpful to telephone first. If this is possible, dates booked provisionally will be held for fourteen days, pending return of booking form with deposit.



How to get there

COLSTERDALE

The approach is via Masham, Foeby and Healey. After Healey take right at the 'No through road' sign, signposted Colsterdale. The road is gated towards the end - please make sure that you leave these gates as you find them. NB: The road is not suitable for long vehicles.

The address of the centre is: Toc H Colsterdale
Healey, Masham, Ripon,
North Yorkshire, HG4 4NN
Tel. Ripon (0765) 89382

Nearby places of interest are:

Masham Churchyard - anglican stone, Druids Temple - regency (6 miles), Jervaulx Abbey (12 miles), Fountains Abbey (16 miles), Ripon Minster and wakeman's house (16 miles), West Tanfield - church and marion gatehouse (11 miles), Snape Castle (11 miles), Middleham Castle (15 miles), Richmond Castle and ancient market town (19 miles), Castle Bolton (22 miles), Ripley - kneeling cross (23 miles), Brimham Rocks - millstone grit crags (20 miles), Thorsborough Moor - stone circles (12 miles), Brathwaite Hall - National Trust (16 miles), How Stean Gorge, Nidderdale (17 miles), Lightwater Valley (13 miles), Riding and Pony Trekking at Swinstan. The nearest shopping centre is Masham (7 miles); there is a small shop and post office, and two inns at Foeby (5 miles), and a church at Healey (4 miles).



TOC H

